

# Conservation

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Also included in the Nellis conservation program is the Natural Resource Management program. They manage soils, minerals, water, plants and animals and their habitats for the base and range.

According to Mr. Eric Watkins, Nellis biologist, “Federal, state and local governments create laws, regulations and policies designed to maintain or to re-establish eco-systems. The Air Force is bound by these rules and is subject to penalties and fines for non-compliance.”

The Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan directs all aspects of natural resources management as a unified whole in concert with the Nellis mission.

This plan also identifies and protects sensitive, threatened and endangered species such as the Desert Tortoise and the Las Vegas Bearpoppy.

Due to the security restrictions on the base and range, natural resource surveys were not conducted until recently. During the past eight years we have completed a baseline sur-

veys to determine the species and habitat of for reptiles, birds, rare plants and water resources. These surveys have not only assisted in the management of Air Force properties, but have also aided in regional management objectives.

“We now have a much better understanding of the life that exists on Nellis” stated Mr. Watkins. “Through surveys we have discovered new populations of rare plants, lowering their vulnerability throughout the region.

The Nellis Air Force Range contains pristine examples of Mojave Desert, Great Basin Desert and ecotonal (transitional) ecosystems. It may be hard to imagine to a resident of the base that we have substantial populations of mule deer, bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, and mountain lion on the range,” he add.

“The partnership we have with the community ensures we learn from our past and preserve our future,” said Col. Andrew S. Dichter, 99th Air Base Wing commander. “Not only is Nellis the crown jewel of the Air Force for combat air forces training, but also for Nevada’s historical preservation.”



*Archeological treasures abound on Nellis, such as this ancient drawing.*



*Places like this can be a real gold mine of information about early settlers.*



*Wildlife of all shapes and sizes is plentiful on Nellis.*



Courtesy photos.

*The ranges around Nellis are a perfect classroom environment for teaching and demonstrating the wonders of the desert to students and others.*